

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 37 – 69 are pending in the application.

The outstanding Office Action requires restriction of the present invention to one of the following:

Group I, claims 37 – 53 and 64;

Group II, claims 54 - 63; or

Group III, claims 65 – 69.

The outstanding Office Action also notes that the dependency of claim 64 appears to be incorrectly stated. Claim 64 has been amended to depend from claim 54.

In order to be responsive to the Office Action, Applicants elect Group I, claims 37 – 53 and 64, with traverse, for prosecution on the merits.

Applicants respectfully submit that unity of invention should prevail for the following reasons.

Applicants respectfully draw the Examiner's attention to the PCT phase of the application in which no objection to unity of invention was raised. As support for the contention that unity of invention exists in the instant application, Applicants would like to point out that the common element to all of the claims is the presence of a transparent adhesive film that is provided with adhesive on one side and is to be applied to a data carrier surface that is to be protected. For example, claims 37 to 53 relate to a method of coating an optically readable data carrier by applying a transparent adhesive film that is provided with adhesive on one side. Claims 54 through 64 relate to an apparatus for coating an optically readable data carrier, and provide for a laminating station for applying a transparent adhesive film that is provided

with adhesive on one side. Finally, claims 65 to 69 relate to an optically readable data carrier comprising a transparent adhesive film that is provided with adhesive on one side. It is respectfully submitted that such a transparent adhesive film that is provided with adhesive on one side for an optically readable data carrier is a unique technical feature that is common to all of the claims of the instant application. Consequently, it is respectfully submitted that unity of invention in fact does exist among all of claims 37 through 69.

Applicants have attempted to be fully compliant with the requirements of the outstanding Office Action. However, should the Examiner have any further comments or suggestions, the undersigned would very much welcome a telephone call in order to discuss appropriate claim language that will place the application into condition for allowance.

Respectfully Submitted,



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